



# NEWS RELEASE

OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY  
WESTERN DISTRICT OF MISSOURI

**TODD P. GRAVES**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **SPRINGFIELD RESTAURANT OPERATOR SENTENCED FOR HIRING ILLEGAL ALIENS**

**SPRINGFIELD, Mo.** – Todd P. Graves, United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, announced that one of the operators of the Taste of China restaurant in Springfield, Mo., was sentenced in federal court today for hiring illegal aliens.

**Jeannette Ly Chen**, also known as Jeannette Ly, 47, was sentenced by U.S. Magistrate Judge James C. England this morning to pay a fine of \$15,000.

On May 28, 2004, her husband, **Sheng Chyuan Chen**, also known as Tony Chen, 46, was sentenced to two years of probation for harboring illegal aliens. The court also ordered **Sheng Chyuan Chen** to forfeit to the government \$30,250, which represents his interest in the property (jointly owned with his wife) at 1710 E. Pythian in Springfield. That residence, Graves explained, was used to facilitate the crime of alien concealment. The home, valued at \$60,500, is located near the Taste of China restaurant.

**Sheng Chen**, a native of China, is president of LTCF, Inc., doing business as Taste of China, 935 N. Glenstone, Springfield. **Jeannette Ly Chen**, a native of Indochina, is the secretary of LTCF. The **Chens** are naturalized citizens of the United States.

On Jan. 30, 2004, each of the defendants pleaded guilty to separate but related charges contained in federal informations. They were originally charged together as co-defendants in an indictment returned by a federal grand jury in Springfield on Dec. 18, 2003. Under the terms of their plea agreements, that indictment will be dismissed.

**Jeannette Chen** hired five employees to work at Taste of China, Graves said, knowing that they were unauthorized aliens. **Jeannette Chen** admitted that this was part of a pattern of hiring illegal aliens for employment at the restaurant from August 2002 to Dec. 16, 2003.

Five illegal aliens were living at the E. Pythian residence rent-free while working at the restaurant, Graves said. A sixth illegal alien paid \$200 per month for rent while employed at an unrelated restaurant in Springfield. The **Chens** admitted they knew the five Taste of China employees were illegal aliens at the time of their hiring. Two of those aliens had been employed for more than one year, while the other three were employed more than one month but less than a year.

**Jeannette Chen** is responsible for maintaining employment records for Taste of China and participates with her husband in hiring individuals to work at the restaurant, Graves said. **Jeannette Chen** admitted that she has hired other illegal aliens at Taste of China prior to these five employees, knowing that they were not authorized to work at the restaurant.

This case was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Douglas C. Bunch. It was investigated by the Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

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This news release, as well as additional information about the office of the United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, is available on-line at  
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